

FW: Town Farm

Jodi Ross (jross@westfordma.gov) [Add contact](#)

To: Ellen Harde; 39mainstreet@gmail.com; |

FYI

From: Jennifer Claro

Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2019 4:53 PM

To: Jodi Ross <jross@westfordma.gov>

Cc: Nancy Cook <noakescook01886@yahoo.com>

Subject: Town Farm

Jodi,

As you know our COA Board has an interest in trying to provide affordable housing for those whose incomes fall between 30 to 50 percent of the area median income. Currently, there are no developments that are targeting this income level and need in Westford. To this point we would like to ask if you could please share our interest in Town Farm with the committee that will be determining next steps for this site. We look forward to exploring if this one-time housing for poor farm workers could again fill a critical need for Westford's very low-income older adults.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Claro

Director of Elder Services

20 Pleasant Street

Westford MA 01886

(O) 978 399 2323

(F) 978 392 4992

jclaro@westfordma.gov



Westford Council on Aging

Cameron Senior Center
20 Pleasant Street, P.O. Box 2223
Westford, MA 01886-5323

(978) 692-5523
Fax: (978) 392-4992

April 30, 2019

Ms. Ellen Harde
39 Main Street
Westford, MA. 01886

Dear Ellen,

I would like to outline the Council on Aging Boards interest in Town Farm, steps our COA has taken relating to this property and potential exploratory next steps to determine if this location could be used for needed low income housing and space for the Westford Food Pantry.

COA's points of interest in Town Farm:

- "Construct affordable senior housing units and, in particular, those that support "aging in place,". The Westford Housing Authority stated in April 2016 that there was a 5+ year wait time for the elderly and a 10 + year wait time for families for existing very low income (subsidized) rental housing managed by the authority, (reference 2017 Westford Housing Production Plan, page 56 item B found under Expand Housing Opportunities)
- Westford' population is aging, residents aged 60-74 and 75+ are projected to increase by 26.9% and 116.5% respectively from 2020-40 states 2017 Housing Production Plan (pg., VI., section: Comprehensive Needs Assessment-Population and Households)
- Westford Housing Production Plan states, "The current median rent in Westford is unaffordable for 48.1% of the rental households in Town." (reference pg.32 under Affordability Gap)

Below is a memo from the Land Use Management Office

Hi Jennifer:

Attached please find a partial summary of high-density development projects in town. As you can see from the column labeled as "Units Restricted as Affordable", there are at least 3 projects within the last 10 years that have provided affordable units restricted to at or below 50% of the Area Median Income:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Number of Affordable Units</u>	<u>Status</u>
2017	Hanover Westford Hills	36 rental units at 50% AMI	Still under construction
2015	Abbot Mill Phase II	5 rental units at 50% AMI	Still under construction
2013	Princeton Properties	40 rental units at 50% AMI	Fully constructed and occupied

(Note: Abbot Mill Phase I is fully constructed and provides 6 units at 50% AMI)

While there are other units listed as affordable on the attached partial summary, some of the AMI information is not readily available.)

As our COA continues to advocate for the need for “low income housing” it has been difficult to find the exact number of units that serve those households that incomes fall below 50% of the area median income as noted in above email. Also, I am not sure who in Town can document which housing properties listed on the Partial Summary of High-Density Residential Development Projects in the Town of Westford (found in Attachment C) provide low income housing (below 50% of AMI) although the property such as Princeton Properties states they provide 40 units at or below 50%AMI.

For many of these reasons cited above our COA wants to ensure the “affordable” housing for low to very low income decreases out of pockets costs that are economic disenfranchised simply cannot afford to make ends meet. Empowering seniors to remain healthy and economically secure in their own housing and community reduces needed spending on costlier social/health related supported programs and equally important increases their vitality in everyday living.

Steps our COA has taken in learning more about Town Farm as a potential low-income housing community and increased space for the Westford Food Pantry:

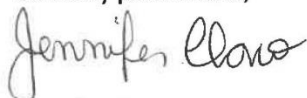
- COA Board voted to move forward on learning of potential use of Town Farm for a small-scale low-income senior housing community and asked COA Director to write a memo to Town Manager expressing our interest and share with newly appointed Town Farm Committee. (see Attachment A)
- Mickey Crocker reached out to Chris Yule to set up a meeting between COA Board members and Director and Westford Food Pantry President to learn more about this property as a developer of successful housing projects. Meeting is on hold currently due to vacation plans for Mr. Yule and possible joint meeting with newly appointed Town Farm Committee.
- Discussed this possible venture with David Hedison, Director of the Chelmsford Housing Authority to see if they would advise on some preliminary next steps response was positive and supportive.
- Established some newer relationships around our COA’s interest in providing more needed affordable housing in Westford and some of those entities include the following: Westford Housing Authority, Habitat for Humanity, Community Teamwork, Scott Clark, Developer and Affordable Housing Trust, etc...

Next Steps:

- Learn and work with newly formed Town Farm Committee on usage for this property before moving to next funder step described below.
- Identify and meet with potential funders of low-income housing projects such as CHOICE Housing Community Housing designation grant(s), Community Development Block Grant Westford and Chelmsford Housing Authority, Habitat for Humanity (in-kind volunteer labor), Westford Affordable Housing Trust, Cummings Foundation, etc.

Lastly, I did not discuss the Westford Food Pantry needs because I believe you will find the letter written by Ken Hyle, Westford Food Pantry President marked as "Attachment B" very helpful in understanding their need for increased space. However, as the COA Director and a board member of the Westford Food Pantry finding adequate space is needed because of confidentiality, opportunity to increase healthier food options as well as perishable foods. Also, it could offer multiple support services for those in varying hardships so pantry and/or social service clients would not have to go from one place to another.

So many possibilities,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Claro".

Jennifer Claro

Council on Aging
MINUTES

2

Cameron Senior Center
4:00 PM, April 10, 2019

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Sandy Collins, Nancy Cook, Helena Crocker, Patricia Holmes,
George Rogers, Kathryn Wilson, Terry Stader, Robert Tierney
and Jennifer Claro, Director

Guests: Ken Hyle, Westford Food Pantry, President and Janine Nichipor

I. CALLED TO ORDER

Nancy Cook called to meeting to order at 3:59 PM.

II. PREVIOUS MINUTES

MOTION made to PASS the March 13, 2019 minutes with corrections by Helena Crocker and SECONDED by Kathy Wilson – So Voted. PASSED unanimously
(Corrections: Add Helena Crocker to the present list and Previous Minutes change 2018 to 2019)

III. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

A. Town Farm Building – At Monday's Selectmen's meeting, the committee discussed the process of demolition. People expressed concern that the building is historical and should be preserved. The committee agreed to wait 6 months and to form a committee to research options. The new committee will be appointed at the April 23rd Selectmen's meeting.

COA Board members discussed possible use of the property which would consist of Low-income housing (serving those households living *below* 50 percent of the Area Median Income based on HUD guidelines) and possible location for the Westford Food Pantry. Also, Jennifer talked to David Hedison, Executive Director, Chelmsford Housing Authority, Director about their interest in helping our COA if we moved forward in an advisory capacity at this time and the CHA was supportive in providing their experience and knowledge with developing housing properties. Jennifer did say she had spoken to Mickey Crocker about setting up a meeting with Chris Yule, developer to learn more about this property from the work he had preliminarily done however Mickey said he was out of Town.

Attachment B



The Westford Food Pantry

April 26, 2019
Re: Food Pantry Space

To: Jennifer Claro, Director of Elder Services

Helena "Mickey" Crocker, in the early 1980's, was instrumental in establishing the Pantry and having it located at the Cameron Senior Center.

Initially, the Pantry primarily distributed canned and dry goods to those in need in our community. Since then, we have increased the products we offer to include not only the canned and dry goods, but a variety of frozen foods as well as several refrigerated items such as eggs, cheese, butter, etc. We also now offer much needed personal care and household cleaning products.

Today, we not only serve people in our community, but we also provide assistance to those in need that live in many of the surrounding towns. Currently, there are over 210 families registered that use our facility. In the last 12 months, we had over 2,400 visits to our store and distributed about 5,000 bags of groceries, etc. As Westford continues to grow, there are going to be more people that will need our assistance.

The Pantry room itself is approximately 180 square feet and this limited space prevents us from offering other nutritional items such as fresh vegetables, fruits, milk, etc. It also requires us to be open 17 times a month for about 50 hours. We do this with the help of our 40 volunteers.

We could not do what we do without the strong support of the Council on Aging and the Cameron Senior Center. However, the Officers and Board of the food pantry now feel that the time is coming when we will need more space and as such we will begin the process of looking for an alternative location. Our search will include exploring the use of town owned properties, which is our preference, as well as other properties that are available in town.

Again, we thank you for all your support and please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments.

Ken Hyle
President

**20 Pleasant Street
Westford, Massachusetts 01886
978-692-5523**

Partial Summary of High-Density Residential Development Projects in the Town of Westford, Massachusetts

Project Name	Approving Authority	Approval Type	Total Number of Dwelling Units	Units Restricted as Affordable	Housing Type	Year Approved	Notes
Westford Housing Authority	Zoning Board of Appeals	Use Variance	48	48 units	Rental	1972	48 senior housing units
Sargent School (7 Cross & Church Streets)	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	31	25 units	Rental	1987	31 units - 25 elderly units, 6 units in 3 duplexes
Haystack Estates	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	32	32 units	Ownership	1988	32 townhouse units in 5 buildings
Stoneview Village	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	32	8 units	Ownership	1994	32 single-family dwellings
Elderberry Estates	Planning Board	Flexible Development	12	2 units	Ownership	1999	12 single-family dwellings
Brookside Mill Condominium	Planning Board	Mill Conversion	35	5 units	Ownership	2001	35 units in converted mill building
Villages at Stone Ridge	Planning Board / Town Meeting	Senior Residential Multifamily	110	15 (currently 2 remain on SHI)	Ownership	2001	110 units in many buildings
Rosegate at Westford	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	12	3 units at or below 80% AMI	Ownership	2003	12 townhouse units in 1 building
Residences at Stony Brook I	Planning Board	Flexible Development	15	15 units	Rental	2004	15 units in 3 buildings
Keyes Corner Condominium	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	36	9 units at or below 80% AMI	Ownership	2004	36 townhouse units in 7 buildings
Abbot Mill Phase I	Planning Board	Mill Conversion	129	6 units at 80% AMI, 6 units at 50% Rental		2005	129 units in converted mill building
Concord Place	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	16	4 units at or below 80% AMI	Ownership	2005	16 units in 5 buildings
Woodlands at Laurel Hill (Avalon)	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	84	21 at or below 80% AMI	Rental	2005	84 units in 3 apartment buildings
Westford Housing Authority (Expansion)	Zoning Board of Appeals	Use Variance & Special Permit	37	37 units	Rental	2005	37 senior housing units
Tadmuck Meadows Condominium	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	37	10 units at or below 80% AMI	Ownership	2006	37 townhouses in 8 buildings
Southgate	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	42	11 units at or below 80% AMI	Ownership	2006	42 townhouse units in many buildings
Hawk Ridge	Planning Board	Flexible Development	24	4 units	Ownership	2006	24 units - mix of 4-bed group home, 1 duplex, 20 single-family
Graniteville Woods	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	164	41 units at or below 80% AMI	Ownership	2009	68 single-family dwellings, 96 townhouses in 16 buildings
Beaver Brook Village	Planning Board	Flexible Development	5	1 unit	Ownership	2009	5 single-family dwellings
Cottages in the Woods	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	20	20 units at or below 80% AMI	Ownership	2010	20 detached cottage-style units
CHOICE Westford Veterans' Housing	Planning Board	Flexible Development	5	5 units	Ownership	2010	5 units in a single building
Residences at Stony Brook II	Planning Board	Flexible Development	36	36 units at or below 80% AMI	Rental	2011	36 units in a mix of townhouse and apartments in 7 buildings
Princeton Properties	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	200	40 units at or below 50% AMI	Rental	2013	200 units in 5 four-story apartment buildings
Meadowbrook Estates	Planning Board	Flexible Development	4	0 units	Ownership	2013	4 single-family dwellings
Broadway Condominiums	Zoning Board of Appeals	Special Permits & Variances	6	0 units	Ownership	2013	6 single-family dwellings
Commodore Way	Zoning Board of Appeals	Use Variance/Variance	14	0 units	Ownership	2014	14 units in 10 buildings
Abbot Mill Phase II	Planning Board	Mill Conversion	103	5 units at 80%, 5 units at 50%	Rental	2015	103 units in 4 industrial buildings
Juniper Hill	Planning Board	Flexible Development	18	2 units at or below 80% AMI	Ownership	2016	18 units in single-family dwellings
Hanover Westford Valley	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	240	60 units at or below 80% AMI	Rental	2017	240 units in 3 four-story apartment buildings
Hanover Westford Hills	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	180	36 units at or below 50% AMI	Rental	2017	168 units in 2 four-story apartment buildings, 12 townhouses
Alder Point	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	8	2 units at or below 80% AMI	Ownership	2017	8 units in four craftsman-style duplexes
Sugar Maple Lane	Zoning Board of Appeals	Comprehensive Permit (40B)	28	7 units at or below 80% AMI	Ownership	2018	28 townhouses in 8 buildings
19 Littleton Road	Zoning Board of Appeals	Special Permit & Variances	16	0 units	Ownership	2018	16 townhouse units in 5 buildings (Still actively permitting)

Report: Meeting with Council on Aging – Affordable Housing – May 17, 2019
Updated: September 30, 2019 and again on October 22, 2019

Town Farm Potential Usage – Low / Very Low Income Affordable Senior Housing

Who attended: Jennifer Claro, Alison Christopher, Patti Mason, Bob Tierney, Ken Hyle and others, Nancy Cook, Scott Hazelton, Diane Hendriks, Roberta McGuire. Also present was Helena Crocker.

Areas of Interest:

- I. Low Income / Very Low Income Senior Housing, and
- II. New Home for the Westford Food Pantry

Statements of Need

I. Low/Very Low Income Senior Housing

- clients would be older adults, who are living at or below 50% of Area Median Income (AMI)
- Westford Senior Housing wait list is 150 as of 5/20/19
- non age restricted/include other towns/cities
- waitlist for 2BR apt; 319
- waitlist for 3BR apt: 164
- (as of 10/22/2019, the total waitlist is 1237)

Data Trends (from Town Clerk - Feb. 2018)

- 390 Westford residents turned 60 in 2018
- 433 residents will turn 60 in 2019
- 408 residents will turn 60 in 2020

Westford's poverty level has increased from 2.5% to 3% - Community Teamwork, Inc. 2019

II. Food Pantry

- scope of service has expanded from Westford residents only to also include the community at large - surrounding towns
- serves over 210 families
- In the past year:
 - 2400 store visits & about 5000 bags groceries distributed
- currently about 180 sq ft. space
- limits variety of food offered
- 40 volunteers help with the food pantry
- anticipate needing about 1200 sq ft. of space to accommodate Westford's planned growth
- very excited about the possibility of the Town Farm's potential to house the Food Pantry

Due to privacy concerns and personal pride, or a sense that others are more deserving, many who need housing and/or food assistance don't ask for help. These numbers may be higher. Additionally, on September 16, 2019, the Westford Food Pantry provided the Task Force with following details:

Site requirements:

- 1st floor / single floor
- wheelchair accessible

- double door access for loading
- water and sewage
- heat and air conditioning

Building specifications: **(It is recommended that the developer work with the Westford Food Pantry to satisfy their current and future needs).**

- storefront 600 sq ft.
- warehouse 1000 sq. ft
- admin 900 sq ft (office, conference room, kitchen, waiting area, bathroom
- total square footage - 2500 sq ft.

From: **Ellen Harde** <39mainstreet@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Sep 17, 2019 at 6:59 PM

Subject: Fwd: Specs for proposed new Westford Food Pantry

To: Roberta McGuire <robertamcguire59@gmail.com>, nancy cook <noakescook01886@yahoo.com>, Lynn Cohen <lynnlcohen@gmail.com>, Robert Waskiewicz <RWaskiewicz@brookstonefinancialservices.com>, George Murray <gem.consulting@verizon.net>, Joe Targ <jtarg@westfordma.gov>, Scott Hazelton <shazelton@westfordma.gov>, David Gutbrod <gutbrod@prodigy.net>, Wanda Hall <Wandahall@comcast.net>, Juliette Mount <juliette.mount@gmail.com>, Diane Hendriks <dhenmar@comcast.net>, Marilyn Day <margreenda@aol.com>, Pat Louch <patlouch@gmail.com>, Dan Britko <dbritko@westfordma.gov>, David O'Keefe <dokeefe@westfordma.gov>, Brian G. Alcorn <balcorn@westfordma.gov>

All

FYI, the following came to Don Mills and myself yesterday from Tim Baker, president of the Westford Food Pantry.

Ellen

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: RE: Specs for proposed new Westford Food Pantry

Date: Mon, 16 Sep 2019 19:55:47 -0400

From: Tim Baker <twbaker1021@gmail.com>

To: 39MainStreet@gmail.com, 'Don Mills' <donmills@millswhitaker.com>

CC: k.hyle@verizon.net, Bernardpeloquin@comcast.net, twbaker1021@gmail.com

Hi Ellen and Don -

Based on your request, below please find a "10,000" foot summary of how we see the requirements for a new pantry. This will enable us to fill the growing demand in our town for support in addressing the basic need of just putting food on the table.

We would welcome any opportunity to meet with either or both of you to answer any questions you may have, or to give you a little more color around what we are thinking.

Thank you again for supporting our mission!

Tim

Site requirements:

- 1st floor / single floor
- wheel chair accessible
- Double door access for loading
- water and sewage
- heat and air conditioning

Building specs

- storefront 600 sq ft
- warehouse 1000 sq ft
- adm 900 sq ft (office, conf room, kitchen, waiting area, bathroom)

Total square footage - 2500 sq ft

From: Jennifer Claro <jclaro@westfordma.gov>
Subject: Town Farm
Date: September 19, 2019 at 10:08:45 AM EDT
To: "Dhenmar@comcast.net" <Dhenmar@comcast.net>

Diane,

Thank you for reaching out to me regarding what income level would be best served for additional low-income housing. After speaking with my colleague, Alison Christopher, Town Social Worker, Lisa Larrabee, Westford Housing Authority and our COA Chair, Nancy Cook I would recommend that we target those that live at or below 50% of AMI. The HUD income level criteria for those living at 50% of AMI is as follows:

1-person household - \$37,700

2-person household- \$43,050

Please let me know if you have any more questions and thanks for letting us be a part of this exciting conversation,

Jennifer Claro
Director of Elder Services
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Westford MA 01886
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jclaro@westfordma.gov